



The Cornerstone

**Tau Beta Pi
Michigan Gamma**

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Why and how you should care

By Nathan Rowley (F11 and W12 K-12 Outreach Chair)

Tau Bates,

“Change is a helluva drug”

If you ignore my halfhearted attempt at a semi-dated reference, I hope you'll realize the magnitude of the decision we will soon have before us. For those of you who don't know me, I am Nathan Rowley, a senior in the ME department and the TBP K-12 Outreach Chair from Fall 2011 through now. I had the pleasure of being a part of the board restructuring of EGL (the Engineering Global Leadership honor society), and I hope to share my experience and thoughts with you. We are at a major crossroads in the journey of our organization, and our decision here will affect Tau Bates for a very long time to come. You may be wondering why this should matter to you, especially if you're leaving campus soon. You may never be an officer, never see the inner workings of TBP (they aren't nearly as mysterious as that phrase makes them sound), and still be an awesome member of TBP. But you owe it to the future TBPers who will follow your trail to seriously consider the plan laid out before you. Any misstep we make here will be magnified, while every success will rocket our chapter to new heights.

I hope, through these two paragraphs, to give you both an idea of what this change will affect and to give you a lens with which to evaluate the change. The ones proposing this change have identified a potential issue within the structure of the officer core and think they have a good solution to the problem. While our officer structure is great now, they think it could be excellent. They think that a restructuring would increase the value (impact on the chapter, focus, time commitment, utilization, etc). That is really how a proposal like this should be evaluated, “does this change increase the value of our officer core, or does it diminish it?” Does our officer core become leaner, more able to take on the unpredictable challenges of the future? Does our structure better utilize the precious time of it's officers? Is there better communication among officers, or worse? Will more opinions be shared, more ideas created? Will there be more opportunities for leadership within TBP, or less? Are there a mix of positions within the core that will appeal to various types of leaders? These are some of the questions you must evaluate the proposal with.

I hope that as meetings drag on, and your other commitments weigh heavily in your mind, you never wane in your commitment to making this change as perfect as it can be. The future of Michigan Gamma depends on it.

Note: I deliberately tried to write this with as little bias as possible. I'd be happy to share my position with others, but this is not the right place. If you are curious, come talk to me whenever, or email me at nrowley@umich.edu. ♦

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Upcoming Events:

- New Initiatives 3—2/23
- Cancer Center—2/24
- Pioneer HS Science Fair—3/01
- E/A 2—3/06
- Sequoia Place III—3/07
- KnitWits—3/07
- Southeast Michigan Science Fair—3/09
- MindSET 1—3/10
- Tutoring every Wednesday and Sunday

More information online at

<http://tinyurl.com/7bjlpo>

Please sign up online.



Administrative Note

Submitted by Daniel Becker (President, TBP MI-G)

Originally, this article was to appear in the previous issue of the Cornerstone, handed out at the Second Actives meeting. It was at this same meeting that the idea of the officer restructure was to be proposed. In an effort to promote equal airtime between the introduction of the concept and its rebuttal, I contacted Pritpaul and we came to a mutual agreement under which the article would not be printed in that week's Cornerstone, but would instead be available online via a printed url and accompanied by a short blurb proclaiming the existence of an opposing viewpoint.

The article in its entirety can be found below. I encourage you to read it, as well as the article in favor of the officer restructure. This issue is one of the most important decisions that will be made for our chapter, and I strongly encourage you to read both sides, become part of the discussion, and most importantly, *think*. ◇

Somebody Set Us Up The Bomb (???)¹

Or how the proposed officer restructuring would cause lasting harm to the chapter

By Pritpaul Mahal

Introduction

Unless something has changed since this writing, you have heard a presentation on restructuring the officer corps.

First, some disclaimers. I want to make clear up front that I respect the authors/proponents of the proposal, appreciate their contributions to the chapter over the years, and have no doubt that they have only good intentions of helping the chapter with this proposal. However, I believe they are sorely mistaken, and am writing this article to explain why. I acknowledge that my terminology in the article and especially the headline is drastic/dire. Part of this (e.g. the headline) is for effect, but a lot of it is because I believe this proposal has the potential to cause significant harm.

Some people will probably think that I am opposed to this proposal simply because I don't like change. I will freely admit that I am generally of the "if it ain't broke don't fix it" school of thought, and my opposition to proposals is often because of that. However, in this case, my concerns are much deeper than that. I know it's long², but I hope you will take the time to read this article and consider my points carefully.

The Proposal

I was hoping to provide a detailed and fair summary of the proposal in this section for the benefit of those reading my article without the context of the presentation. However, I appear to have run out of time (no, I didn't write the article linearly!). Let's just say that the idea is to introduce hierarchy into the officer corps, which 7 or 8 officers that report directly to the President and attend the main officer meetings, with around 3 of them having 3 or so officers each under them organized by function. These "officer subcommittees" (my term) would have their own meetings and pass reports and communication up through the "lead officer" (again, my term, I'm not sure how the proposers term these things) to the rest of the "top-level" (my term again) officers.

The Problems

Introducing hierarchy to the officer corps presents several fundamental problems. These include a reduction of information flow and communication, decline in morale, increase in overhead, and elimination of important leadership transition mechanisms. All of these are problematic individually, and combined threaten



Somebody Set Us Up The Bomb (???) (cont'd)

the strength of Michigan Gamma.

Communication

One of the great things about the officer corps as it currently stands is that at an officer meeting you have 15+ people giving their input on matters important to the chapter. While this may sound superfluous, in my experience this certainly adds to the strength of our chapter as more ideas are considered, and these ideas are vetted more carefully. The fact that people are able to contribute to and hear about areas of the operation of the chapter beyond their own little niche is a feature, not a bug. This helps improve the continuity of our operations and the motivation of officers (see sections below).

A rebuttal I've heard to this argument is that while increased communication is great, having too many people in the room leads to a situation where either meetings take too long or people are afraid to speak up about things because they're worried about making the meeting take too long. The thing is, what happens in reality is that the officer meeting is an overview of everything going on in the chapter. The important things do get discussed, and the meeting generally stays within the allotted time. If something does need to be discussed in more detail, it inevitably gets moved to another venue. Usually this is just a short get-together after the officer meeting, but sometimes it is a separate meeting. In either case, because the issue has been discussed briefly during the general meeting, officers with ideas and opinions to contribute (regardless of how related or unrelated their position is) are aware of the general gist of the discussion and can then choose to attend this follow-up.

One might suggest that a general announcement could be sent out about these "mini-meetings" so that those interested can attend. This is impractical for 2 reasons. First, it is difficult to gauge your own interest in a topic without having had a brief discussion first. The second is that many of these "mini-meetings" are in fact very short: just a 5-minute discussion after the officer meeting. Trying to schedule these separately would be impractical, and the need for many wouldn't be known until the issue comes up during the main meeting.

Another counter-argument is that all officers (and indeed any member) would still be welcome to come to officer meetings. While technically true, this is not likely to happen for reasons discussed below

In short, we would end up with a smaller group of people that are able to give a little more input on issues that they may not necessarily have strong feelings about, as opposed to a larger group of people that are able to contribute to discussions about things that they feel strongly about. This takes us to my next concern.

Morale/Culture

Another great thing about the chapter in general, and about the officer corps, is our open and welcoming culture. People who want to take an important leadership role have many avenues, including the officer corps which requires a large amount of dedication and effort, but also provides a significant level of recognition and influence over the direction of the chapter, including in areas unrelated to the particular officer position. You can tell people that this is only a structural change and doesn't affect their recognition or influence all you want. The fact is that while we all have exemplary character, one cannot effectively deny human nature. If I am told that I report to another officer instead of the President, and am not expected at general officer meetings, I am naturally going to feel less important, and that my participation is less *desired*. But being an officer shouldn't be about ego, should it? That's true, but along with feeling important comes a sense of responsibility to the chapter in general (not just to my particular duties), and a willingness and desire to contribute ideas in other areas. It also leads to a feeling that what they have to say *matters*. This is one of the reasons many people prefer to work at a smaller company. How often do you hear these com-



Somebody Set Us Up The Bomb (???) (cont'd)

panies tout (including at TBP meeting presentations) the fact that their hierarchy is flat and has less layers, and that people are more able to contribute to the direction of the company? They tout this because it actually is important to people and attracts better candidates who want to make a difference, just like it currently attracts candidates to our officer corps. Introducing hierarchy will make our currently occasional problem of not enough candidates much worse. (It will also as a practical matter limit more positions to people who have some experience being an officer, sorry I don't have time to detail how in this article.)

In effect, what we would really be doing with this proposal is taking the misnomer "officer core" that people often mistakenly use and that bugs me, and really in fact be turning our officer corps into an "officer core" plus some other officers. This "officer core" effect also has the danger (hopefully avoided, but still possible) of forming more "cliques" of power that limit openness to others. (Again, I don't have time to get into this, and I actually hope/feel that given our character requirements this wouldn't actually be a problem, but it's still a danger... I don't want us to be like HKN's officer corps)

We can say that officer meetings will still technically be open to all officers. The fact is, however, that that will not change the perception of being more closed, people who are not really "supposed" to be there will be less likely to actually feel like their opinions matter enough to come. On a practical level, we would be expecting "non-core" officers who do still have the motivation to participate after effectively being told they don't matter, to spend extra time in order to do so because they would have to come to the general officer meeting in addition to whatever "branch" meetings. This will unavoidably reduce attendance at the general officer meeting. My understanding is that this is actually one of the goals of the proposers. However, as discussed below, lower officer participation is actually a significant negative, not a positive.

Continuity and Idea-Sharing

One of the great strengths of our chapter, and in fact, the key to our strength, is our strong transitions compared to many TBP chapters nationwide and to other societies here at U of M. In fact, we are often asked to come to round

table discussions to help other organizations learn from us on this topic. What gives us this ability? While there are many factors, including the motivation of our members and the size of our chapter, I would argue that one of the biggest factors is the size of our officer corps.

Having so many people involved and invested in the day-to-day running of the chapter, hearing what other officers are doing for their jobs, greatly increases the "safety factor" of having someone who will recognize that something important has been left undone or who will know how the details of how a particular task is done. In sitting in on officer meetings, I often notice instances where somebody who has been an officer for a while is able to fill in details that a new officer may not know.

Introducing hierarchy to the officer corps, especially in the manner proposed, significantly negates this advantage. This will happen on both a cultural and a practical level. Officers who do not feel like a part of a larger cohesive body are less likely to feel a need or desire to be informed of the workings of other "branches" of the officer corps tree (see Culture section). On a purely practical level, officers who are not present at a meeting are unable to pick up details of what others are doing, or to fill in details that they know when they see that they are missing.

Perhaps of a bit less immediate significance, but still very important, is the fact that the current model also helps officers transition more easily and effectively into new roles because they have some level of knowledge about all positions. While we welcome and encourage "new blood" on the officer corps, it is also important to have some continuity in officers that are familiar with many aspects of many positions just from having been there, not necessarily from having done every single positions. Advisors are able to fill



Somebody Set Us Up The Bomb (???) (cont'd)

some of this role, but only because they have over time (starting as officers) gained the knowledge of most positions that the current structure gives them.

The current system is frankly not perfect on this front, in that we sometimes lose a large chunk of experienced officers. In fact, there was one semester in recent memory when we really pushed for non-officer members to come to officer meetings to try to gain experience precisely because we were going to be losing a lot of experienced officers to graduation. Cutting down on the number of experienced officers, however, does not help this problem but just makes it worse.

Benefits?

I should briefly (or at least that was the plan...) address the supposed benefits of the proposal. The main ones that I have heard put forth are that it reduces the management workload of the President, that it is more consistent with the overall structure of the rest of the chapter, and that it keeps the size of officer meetings more manageable.

First, the workload on the President. After all, one of the proposers is a past President. I admire the goal of reducing his/her workload because as we all know, our Presidents do have a lot on their plates. However, I think the workload reduction that this proposal achieves is minimal if any, and may actually have the opposite effect by adding more overhead and bureaucracy to communications. The fact is that in general, most decisions are either of a nature that the officers themselves can make them, or are intertwined enough with the operation of the rest of the chapter that the President needs to be involved. I admit that there are probably a few areas in which the "top tier" officer is able to provide guidance, but in practice these will be few and far between. In practice what we will see is, depending on the boldness of the officer in question, either them skipping the middle layer and asking the President directly, or involving the middle layer, still requiring a response from the President, but adding an unnecessary delay. In either case, the President will often need to be involved anyways.

Where this proposal may actually be helpful is in reducing the amount of "double-checking" the President needs to be doing to make sure things get done (though that introduces problems of its own³). However, in the end the President will still need to have at least some level (though likely reduced) of keeping tabs on everyone, including the "second tier" officers.

More overhead is also introduced in that important matters need to go back and forth between different meetings and/or e-mail lists to get things fully fleshed out, taking more time from everyone involved, including the President. The proposers have probably shown you a diagram of the overall structure of the chapter that includes other people reporting to officers. They contend that this shows that restructuring the officer corps to also include more reporting relationships will be more consistent. However, what they neglect to mention (or consider?) is that all of those relationships they show are of chairs who have very specific and – this is important – time-limited tasks such as running a specific service project or social activity. Unlike officers, they are not involved in the sort of semester-long or year-long running of the chapter that requires coordination with other officers. I unfortunately don't have time to go into a more detailed explanation of why this is fundamentally different right now, but I hope the gist comes through.

On to size of officer meetings. The proposers probably showed you a picture of a very crowded officer meeting. It probably even got some chuckles and some comments from those who had to sit on the floor or stand for that entire meeting. I, however, honestly don't see the relevance or point (other than to gain those chuckles or distract from the main point) of showing a picture of one meeting that was held in a much smaller room than usual. If they showed a picture of one of our meetings in the current room they are held in, you would see nothing unusual or interesting. I think the main point however that they intend to make is that large officer meetings are less productive. I fundamentally disagree with this and think/hope I've made clear why in the Communication section above. If not, feel free to ask.



Somebody Set Us Up The Bomb (???) (cont'd)

Long-Term Damage

One may wonder why I am so strongly concerned about this proposal. After all, I'm known for my general opposition to "fixing what isn't broken". Yet, I've never felt an issue to be so important that I've stayed up for a significant portion of the night and invested so much emotional energy³ to write a (hopefully?) persuasive article about it (and possibly made Justine very angry with me for being so late and writing so much). I usually just state my opposition, maybe engage in some debate, and then let the chips fall where they may. Why the larger than usual concern over this proposal?

The reason is that the damage from this restructuring could be significant, and more importantly, long-lasting and difficult to reverse. I realize that people may not like, or may even be offended by, my strong opposition to this proposal (given that it's coming from well-respected long-time members). However, I would be remiss in my duty to the chapter if I decided to just "let it be" in this case as I often do. Most decisions (for example the recent adoption of a Third Actives meeting and tiered leadership) can be undone easily if needed, with no lasting effects. But this proposal is different.

How is it different? As indicated above, it would cause a significant shift in the culture of the officer corps, and would also cause a weakening of officer corps transitions and continuity, and as a result the chapter as a whole. Recovering from a one-time weakening of the chapter would become a long-term project as we would have lost the smooth continuous "flow" cycle of leadership transitions that keep things running so smoothly. Therefore, it becomes not just a matter of "it's not working, let's repeal it", but a process of reintroducing the smooth flow, institutional knowledge, and culture that has been built up over time. True, this would not kill the chapter in a single semester. The first semester will seem to mostly run just fine. But problems would also not be very apparent until they become bad enough that they are difficult to recover from. Furthermore, if the cliques that I am afraid of do indeed form, there would be a form of institutionalized resistance to changing back.

Am I being over-dramatic? I really honestly don't think so and hope I've gotten my point across well.

Conclusion

Introducing hierarchy to the officer corps will be deeply harmful to the chapter. The benefits, on the other hand, are minimal. While it is well-intentioned, the chapter should reject this deeply flawed proposal. ◇

Footnotes

- 1) Because I am perpetually afraid of offending people or being misunderstood, I feel a need to clarify again that I don't think anyone is *maliciously* setting up a bomb. I am just very afraid of the consequences of the proposal and also wanted to make a humorous pop-culture allusion similar to the one I expect in the subtitle of the presentation of the proposal (though perhaps I'm dating myself with the reference I chose?).
- 2) Sorry it's so long. I didn't expect it to be when I started writing (I expected a single page!), but there's just so much to say. In fact, I had to cut out some things I wanted to cover just for a lack of time to write them. And for me, that's a huge thing to say (see footnote 4).
- 3) This is actually pretty important and really needs to be a section of its own, but I just ran out of time. Basically, adding the managerial role to the top-level positions adds to the number of positions which realistically require previous officer corps. This affects multiple areas of my argument, including its impact on the open culture of the officer corps and the chapter, and negative effects on continuity and transitions.
- 4) I HATE and dread writing – that's one of the big reasons I didn't go for a PhD and am resisting pressure to go to law school. So it really does take a lot of energy out of me. I had actually even decided that I was going to put this off and write it later, until someone convinced me that it's more effective to present my rebuttal at the same time the main proposal is presented. I'm also just not very good at it (especially given the time pressure), so I'm sorry if this article is unclear, deficient, doesn't flow very well, or doesn't make my point effectively. The argument is much more cohesive in my head. Please do let me know if something is confusing and I'd be happy to talk to you about it and/or maybe even write a follow-up clarification article.



Why New Structure is Good

A reasoning for the proposed restructuring

Early this semester a number of changes were implemented for our chapter to TBP to make our chapter more relevant to our members and to rectify issues that had arisen. This latest change seeks to address the communication overhead that currently faces the chapter president, and to allow the officer corps to be more adaptive to needed change. This would be accomplished by introducing more structure into the officer corps, allowing the president to have greater focus. This new structure would additionally allow greater leadership opportunities for our members.

Tau Beta Paradigm Shift

By Daniel P. Kiefer (President FI I)

If a frog is placed into boiling water, he will immediately jump out, unharmed.

If that same frog is in water, and the temperature is gradually increased, he will literally be cooked alive. MI-Gamma is that frog, and the temperature is rising.

It was mid-November last semester on a brisk winter's eve, while I was driving several officers home from north campus when I was struck with a somewhat unorthodox idea: What would I do if I were given the opportunity to set up our chapter from scratch? That would be preposterous I'm sure... but what if?...

The Motivation.

As President I was "faced with many challenges..." both figuratively and literally. There were many challenges that just came with the tasks of the position of President, but there were also, in my professional opinion, unnecessary challenges. Many of these, I began to think, could be rectified simultaneously with some ambition, support, and a little creativity.

The Idea.

Restructure the officer core so as to have it align better with our functional areas and overall goals.

The Result.

1. Fewer officers report directly to the President
2. More opportunity for leadership
3. Better defined and more logical officer responsibilities

The Plan.

Although this whole thing may seem complicated, the idea itself becomes much simpler and easier to understand if you forget what you have learned about TBP's leadership structure already, and instead focus on what active members and leaders accomplish together *collectively*. From here, you can reallocate tasks and responsibility, with revolutionary fashion, in a more optimal way that can even result in synergy (an MBA's



Why New Structure is Good (cont'd)

Tau Beta Paradigm Shift (cont'd)

way of saying better for everyone, the group as a whole, and the opportunity to even introduce entirely new benefits).

After much deliberation with the other officers, and several revisions to the proposed structure, I believe our plan is a great idea for MI-G. This will be voted on very soon... so please consider the options, and the consequences. Left unaltered I think our chapter President will continue to be bogged down with details, and our officer meetings will continue to drag on. Let us correct this with an innovative approach. Rather than let the temperature slowly rise on our organization, I challenge you to kiss this frog and watch it transform into a Tau Beta Prince.

And what about service?

By Maria Schneider (Service Chair F11)

Culture

I agree that there is a chance of some "culture" risks, such as feelings of decreased appreciation, but most of these can become a non-issue if the officer who reports to another officer puts in the effort to attend the main officer meetings. If they want to take a low key involvement, they can, and if they want a lot of involvement, they are encouraged to participate. Also, the officer positions that are put under another officer are very specific roles. These officers in the past do not frequently get heavily involved in issues outside of what directly affects their position. If they choose not to attend, then I don't believe this will damage the organization.

Continuity

We are said to have smooth officer transitions, but that is not always the case. I was never given a transition report, not even an old, outdated one, nor was I given more than a 30 minute rushed explanation on Book Swap. Only after most of Book Swap was planned, did I finally get an updated Book Swap Procedure. Who is to hold the officers responsible for actually transitioning their successor? The officer with others reporting to him/her can make sure those transitions occur and help out with them as needed. The communication between officers in a 'module' will give the officer serving as point person more knowledge about the other positions in their module. He or she can then accordingly ensure that the officers they are responsible for transition appropriately. The president can additionally make sure the officers who report to him/her complete their transitions, and given the more manageable load, can help with transitions if needed. This structure would make the workload of the president more manageable, while logically distributing responsibility so that operations and transitions go more smoothly.

Service

It may appear to be the case that many decisions fall into one of two categories: decisions that can be made by a particular officer in isolation, or decisions that affect enough aspects of the chapter to necessitate direct presidential involvement.



Why New Structure is Good (cont'd)

And what about service? (cont'd)

This is not the case for the service branch. Service is one of the major aspects of TBP and the face that the rest of the University and the Ann Arbor community sees. Therefore, things in this area need to run smoothly and efficiently. Having served as the Service Chair last semester, I see an immense benefit for the organization with this restructuring. Namely, it would formalize and improve the communication between all the officers involved in service projects. As Service Chair, I was in charge of making sure all the service projects for TBP had leaders, did not conflict, had the necessary materials, and, most importantly, had enough volunteers. There was one major hole in this: MindSET. I was never involved in scheduling of MindSET (although I know that there are extra factors that play into this), and I never knew if they had enough volunteers. As for the scheduling, I did not even know which days were under consideration until the official day was posted on the Google calendar. If I had known what days were under consideration, I could have notified the other project leaders to avoid those days if possible. Instead, other projects would be scheduled for a day MindSET ended up on and therefore both events would suffer from not enough volunteers. Secondly, the volunteering situation was difficult. I had to constantly be pushing people to volunteer for various service projects. If a project was on a weekend with MindSET, I did not know how MindSET was doing volunteering-wise. Should I push for volunteers for one of my service projects, like Recycle Ann Arbor, which would be better with more volunteers but can run with only a few, or do I really need to push for people to volunteer for MindSET instead, which cannot function without enough volunteers and has become a huge endeavor? Further complicating matters, I never knew how many volunteers MindSET had because their volunteer registration is not on our website. I tried communicating with the MindSET officer, but I felt like it was not my place to get involved or push for information. When I asked about the volunteering, I got a vague answer and saw a hint of “don’t worry about it, it’s not your problem”. This may not have been the intention of the email, but that is how it came across. Further, I feel like it is every bit the Service Chair’s responsibility to know about project scheduling and volunteers, as those are core responsibilities for the Service Chair. If the restructuring goes through, there will be a formalized avenue for communication between the Service Chair, MindSET Chairs, and the Campus Outreach Chair. This will improve scheduling so as to avoid most of the conflicts (which will by itself help the volunteering situation), and will allow the Service Chair to know focus to ensure projects run smoothly and have enough volunteers.

A Brief Counterpoint to Expressed Concerns

By Mike Hand (2011 External Vice President, W12 Corporate Relations Officer)

The main points that have arisen against this fall into the general categories of communication, morale, and transitions. Transitions are covered very well by Maria’s section so I will here focus on the other three. (In this section, the terminology breaks down a little bit when referring to meetings of the various officers, for clarity I will “use officer meetings” to refer to meetings in which the president is the moderator, and “module meetings” to refer to the meetings of the various branches (service, communications, etc.).

Communication

The majority of officer meetings this semester have exceeded the allotted time, some by a significant amount. Further, discussion of ideas is somewhat muted and rushed during the meetings as people do refrain from



Why New Structure is Good (cont'd)

A Brief Counterpoint to Expressed Concerns (cont'd)

speaking due to time worries.

Given the proposed structure, it may appear to that information flow would be reduced. Under the new system, there wouldn't be a reduction of information flow. Instead, information would be prioritized to the most interested or affected parties. The officer meetings would not be closed off to anybody. Officers that care to stay involved in the items covered in officer meetings would be encouraged to still attend. The difference is that they would not be required to. Officers would only be required to attend the meetings that have direct bearing on their role, or where their role has direct bearing on that of another. This streamlines the flow of information, and creates a more efficient system for all involved.

Morale

One tremendously important avenue for involvement that our chapter has is New Initiatives meetings. These meetings allow anyone, not just officers, to be directly involved in the discussions of the future direction of the chapter. This has helped our chapter to develop a strong culture of responsibility from all members, and this carries over especially to those that take leadership roles in the society.

One perceived benefit of the current flat structure is that it models that of a small company. It is important to note that it is imperative that the the leadership structure adapt to the needs of the organization. A flat structure works very well for a smaller organization with fewer leaders, which our chapter has been in the past. Over the years however, we have increased in size, particularly with respect to the officer corps. Any small company that grows to become a large company invariably needs to adopt new structure for its leadership. Of late, TBP has grown to become a larger organization and similarly needs to adapt.

With an increase in membership activity recently, not having enough interested candidates has been, thankfully, a very minor issue. Further, the new structure for positions allows new opportunities for leadership in the society by delegating some of the responsibility previously held by the president to other officers. By allowing increased responsibility in some positions, I strongly believe that there will be increased interest in officer positions, since people tend to want to "move on to something bigger" following a term in a given position. Further, to see that structure does not necessarily result in low leadership interest, one need look no further than SWE. The structure of SWE is very hierarchical, but there has not been an acute lack of interest problem recently.

It may additionally appear that by adding the proposed structure, certain positions would be effectively restricted to "veteran" officers. The simple truth is that this already happens, and further it is not necessarily a bad thing. There are some positions that require more responsibility than others, and it is important for people to have the opportunity to develop the necessary skills and experience in a position that is more conducive to developing them. It is critical for our chapter that there be positions for members to jump into without previous experience, but it is equally important that someone not be thrown in over their head in a position that entails considerable responsibility. This is not to say that previous experience need come from a previous TBP officer position. There are precedents for electing "new" officers to the more traditional "veteran" positions if the situation warrants it.

Conclusion

This proposal encompasses a rather significant change for the chapter, which others and I feel will better the chapter. Please seriously consider the arguments made and if you have any questions please ask. In addition, please consider attending the New Initiatives Meeting this Thursday, which will be the main venue for this discussion. ◇



Kevin's Rules for Life

By Kevin Joseph

A lot of times people ask me, "Kevin, how come you so happy all the time?" (Disclaimer: no one ever really asks me this) I actually only have a few simple rules for life that keep me rooted. Since Justine is always asking for articles, I thought I'd help her by helping you help yourself.

1. **Don't be so serious.** I am always amused when I see people running around texting, talking, twittering, and various other t's that apparently require their immediate and urgent attention. People take so many things seriously that really shouldn't be. I've never seen any proof that life is meant to be taken seriously, and until I do, I'm just going to lie back and chill.

2. **Do the things you like.** If you don't like what you're doing, ask yourself why you're doing it. If you don't know why you're doing it, then stop. If you don't like why you're doing it, then you need to reevaluate your life decisions. If you're doing it in pursuit of a greater goal that you do like, then keep that goal in mind and focus on that.



3. Pop quiz: What's very attractive and rarely seen on North Campus? That's right, a **smile!** It only takes a single candle to fight back the darkness.

4. **Pick your relationships wisely.** Your relationships define your life, so you don't want to be around people that are causing you unhappiness or holding you back. Special corollary for those special someones who have dumped or rejected you (since I have much experience with that): When you've been dumped, the best revenge is to live life to your fullest. Become the best person you could possibly be. Do the things you've only dreamed of doing. Make her regret it, not you.

5. Spoiler alert: **You're going to die someday.** Morbid? Yes, but until you realize that fact you risk wasting your life on things that you don't care about. Life is not a race! You don't want to get to the end, look back and say "Well, that was a waste of time." No one's keeping score, so lighten up and enjoy the ride. :) ◇

**LIFE IS A JOURNEY
WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU GOING?**





The Incredible Team Active

By: Team Active Commander Nathan McKay

Every semester Tau Beta Pi witnesses a superlative team of electees rise amongst their peers, determined to do great things and bring honor to their group leader. This electee group claims the semester as their own, earning points as fast as they can be dealt out. They hold regular group meetings, attend social and service events as a team, cook meals for the officer meetings, and craft deserts fit for a king. They are a glimmering beacon of hope, shining as bright as the bent they just polished.



This semester is different though. The team that has pulled ahead of the pack contains no electees. They have no group leader holding their hands. They are not even required to do the things they do, and yet they surpass all expectations. I am of course talking about Team Active, a fitting name for a team of active members who truly express their namesake. Not just active members, but officer! The very people who make the Tau-Beta-World go round.

But they can't really win, can they?

Of course we can win. Team Active can earn as many points as any other group. So far we have earned an astonishing 120 points. This amazingly active team has attended social events, held group meetings, painted the rock, polished a bent (the hard one!), made food for the officer meetings, and planned out how they can stay in the lead and crush the competition. We welcome all competitors, but be warned, you are not match for Team Active!



Puzzles

Fill in with 1-9 (and A, B, C for the right puzzle) so that there are no repeats in any row, column, or larger box.

And as requested, these are of the difficulty "easy".

9				5	4	3
4		3	8			
	5		3	6		7 9
		9		7		2 8
5		4	1	8	2	9
	8	2		3		5
8	2		9	3		4
				7	3	8
	9	7	4			5

9				1	A	5	
		4				1	9
					C	7	4
	4		2		5	1	C
	8	B		6		5	2
6			C	4			8 9
7	5				3	8	
	B	3			C	6	A
	4	C	1	6		7	B
6			7	9			
3	2	5				B	
		A		7	C		
							2